

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PEKING 01658 230926Z

16  
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSO-00

IO-13 OMB-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01 FDRE-00 AID-05 (ISO) W

----- 094867

R 230545Z AUG 76  
FM USLO PEKING  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6243  
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1658

E.O.11652: GDS  
TAGS: ECON, ETRD, CH  
SUBJECT: TANGSHAN EARTHQUAKE: SUPPLEMENTARY DAMAGE INFORMATION

REF: (A) PEKING 1583, (B) HONG KONG 9521

1. INFORMATION ON EARTHQUAKE DAMAGE CONTINUES TO BE VERY DIFFICULT TO GET, AND IT IS CLEAR THAT THE PRC HAS TAKEN STEPS TO MINIMIZE CONTACT BY FOREIGNERS WHO WERE IN THE TANGSHAN-TIENTSIN AREA WITH PRESS AND DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES IN PEKING. NO FOREIGN DIPLOMATS HAVE BEEN PERMITTED TO VISIT TANGSHAN OR TIENTSIN. ALTHOUGH US AND JAPANESE APPLIED TO VISIT TIENTSIN. THE JAPANESE AND FRENCH DELEGATIONS IN TANGSHAN EACH HAD ONLY BRIEF CONVERSATIONS WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE EMBASSIES IN PEKING ON JULY 28; THAT EVENING THEY WERE TAKEN TO SHANGHAI WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO NOTIFY THEIR EMBASSIES. BOTH SAW VERY SEVERE DAMAGE IN TANGSHAN.

2. DELEGATIONS IN TIENTSIN WERE SENT ON TO SHANGHAI FROM PEKING AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, AND WHILE IN PEKING WERE NOT ENCOURAGED TO CONTACT THEIR EMBASSIES. THE JAPANESE TECHNICIANS REMAINED IN PEKING LONGER, BUT IN THE HOSPITAL AND NOT IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THEIR EMBASSY. FOUR WERE SERIOUSLY  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PEKING 01658 230926Z

INJURED; OF THOSE "SLIGHTLY INJURED", ONE WAS BROUGHT

OUT OF TIENTSIN UNCONSCIOUS AND THE OTHER TEMPORARILY BLINDED.

3. ALTHOUGH THE MAIN RAIL LINE THROUGH TANGSHAN IS REPORTED OPEN, THE "SOVIET" TRANS-SIBERIAN TRAINS (WHICH GO THROUGH CHITA, HARBIN, SHENYANG, AND TIENTSIN, HAVE NOT YET RESUMED SERVICE.)

4. FRENCH EMBASSY INFORMS US THAT A SINO-FRENCH EMIGRANT FROM TIENTSIN SAID THE SECOND WEEK IN AUGUST THAT THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE THERE, PARTICULARLY TO THE OLDER HOUSES IN THE CITY, AND THAT THERE WERE SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN THE SUPPLY OF BOTH FOOD AND WATER IN THE CITY.

5. THE ITALIAN TECHNICIANS AT THE GIE/ALALDA POWER PLANT IN SOUTHERN TIENTSIN SAID THAT DAMAGE TO THEIR PLANT WAS SLIGHT, BUT THAT CONSTRUCTION HAD BEEN STOPPED BECAUSE THEIR WORKERS LEFT FOR TANGSHAN. ACCORDING TO THE ITALIAN EMBASSY, THE CHINESE WORKERS WERE MOSTLY FROM THE TANGSHAN AREA AND SIMPLY WENT HOME. WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO FIND OUT WHETHER THEY WERE ACTUALLY PART OF A RECONSTRUCTION TEAM, BUT THE ITALIANS THOUGHT THEY WERE NOT.

6. THERE HAS BEEN NO NOTICEABLE POWER SHORTAGES IN PEKING, BUT POWER CONSUMPTION IN TANGSHAN IS PROBABLY STILL FAR BELOW NORMAL.

7. WE STILL HAVE NO INFORMATION ON THE PIPELINES, BUT THE FACT THAT THERE APPEARS TO BE NO SHORTAGE OF GASOLINE IN PEKING ARGUES AGAINST SERIOUS DAMAGE. THE JAPANESE, WHO FURNISHED THE HIGH-PRESSURE STEEL PIPE FOR THE LINE, DOUBT THAT IT WAS DAMAGED.

8. JAPANESE INFORM US THAT ONE JAPANESE SHIP CALLED AT CHINWANGTAO AND LOADED COAL ON SCHEDULE, BUT SHIPPERS HAVE BEEN TOLD NOT TO SEND ADDITIONAL SHIPS. JAPANESE BELIEVE THAT A COAL SHORTAGE DUE TO DAMAGE AT THE KAILUAN MINES IS THE REASON, NOT HARBOR DAMAGE.  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03      PEKING 01658 230926Z

9. WE HAVE DISCOVERED INDICATIONS OF RURAL POPULATION DENSITY IN THE TANGSHAN AREA IN "HUAPEI CHINGCHI TILI", 1957. THE AREA NORTH OF AN EAST-WEST LINE RUNNING THROUGH TANGSHAN HAD JUST 300-400 PEOPLE PER SQUARE KILOMETER; THE AREA JUST SOUTH OF THIS LINE HAD 200-300 PEOPLE PER SQUARE KILOMETER. IF THE POPULATION HAD GROWN SINCE 1957 AT AN AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE OF TWO PERCENT, THE

POPULATION DENSITY WOULD BE ALMOST 50 PER CENT HIGHER  
THAN THESE FIGURES.

10. US AND JAPANESE BUSINESSMEN HAVE BEGUN TO RETURN  
AUGUST 20, AND THE STATE TRADING CORPORATIONS ARE  
EAGER TO RETURN TO NORMAL BUSINESS.  
DEAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** EARTHQUAKES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 23 AUG 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ElyME  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976PEKING01658  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760321-1251  
**From:** PEKING  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760829/aaaaaypp.tel  
**Line Count:** 122  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 PEKING 1583, 76 HONG KONG 9521  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ElyME  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 21 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <21 MAY 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <17 SEP 2004 by ElyME>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** TANGSHAN EARTHQUAKE: SUPPLEMENTARY DAMAGE INFORMATION  
**TAGS:** ECON, ETRD, TPHY, CH  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006